

Total development spend hits \$11b

Chris Calcino looks at projects underway in Toowoomba region



DEVELOPMENT in the Toowoomba region is forging ahead faster than anywhere else in the country with a total spend of more than \$11 billion.

The Toowoomba and Surat Basin Enterprise's latest Development Status Report has collated the region's developments under way (with a construction cost of \$2 million and over), in planning and completed within the past 12 months.

"This research shows a total development spend within the region of in excess of \$11 billion," TSBE chief executive officer Shane Charles said.

"These numbers are a great reminder of exactly how much activity is happening in our region and what that means for the community."

"We have an unemployment rate far lower than Queensland's average and major opportunities set to come our way."

"This is an exciting time to be in Toowoomba and we will only see more growth in the coming years."

Building boom

THE list of major developments underway has reached a staggering \$3.5 billion, most of which fall under the "infrastructure and services" and "mining" categories.

Topping the tally board was the \$1.7 billion expansion of the New Acland coal mine, expected to be completed in 2017.

The ongoing flood restoration of the region's transport network is expected to have costed \$1.055 billion by its finish in June

next year.

TSBE put the burgeoning Wellcamp Airport and business park's total cost at \$300 million by this October.

Much more investment in the airport will be forthcoming once it enters its next stages of construction.

The property and construction industries boasted more than \$184 million of work already underway.

Ready to roll

MORE than \$2.1 billion of projects have all necessary council approvals in place and are simply waiting for their developers to pick up tools.

FK Gardner and Sons' long-running plan to build an 11-storey, 48-unit high-rise at the corner of Cohoe and Herries Sts is still on the cards.

The company renewed its development application to council earlier this month in order to avoid



BOOM TIME: TSBE chief executive officer Shane Charles.

the lapse of its existing approvals.

An FKG spokesman said the Eastpointe Apartments development would happen but not in the immediate future.

Also making the "ready to go" list were the QIC redevelopment of Gardentown and Grand Central shopping centres (\$350 million), Toowoomba bypass (\$1.66 billion) and the expansion of

No other regional city, nor capital city for that matter, will be able to boast the amount of infrastructure development occurring.

— TSBE CEO Shane Charles

Brownesholme Retirement Village in Highfields (\$15.5 million).

The Eastside Village fast-food precinct on Cohoe St also made the list, following a failed appeal against approval in the Planning and Environment Court.

TSBE estimated the cost of the development at \$9 million.

Our wish list

THE list of serious development proposals is where most of the money lies, topping \$5.9 billion of projects.

One of the least-known schemes is to build one of Australia's largest solar farms 35km west of Millmerran on the Gore Hwy.

The developer of the proposed Bulli Creek Solar Farm has stated the farm could be generating electricity by 2016.

The application to Toowoomba Regional Council states the project would require the "staggered delivery of up to approximately

\$3.5b

Currently underway



\$20 MILLION: Drayton Central Shopping Centre opened in January.



\$6 MILLION: The first stage of the Sanctuary Rise housing estate was completed in April.



\$300 MILLION: Construction of Wellcamp Airport is due to end in October.



\$350 MILLION: The redevelopment of Grand Central and Gardentown shopping centres should finish in September, 2016.

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\$24.5 MILLION: The new Toowoomba City Library will be built by mid-2015. FAR LEFT: \$1.66 billion has been budgeted for the Toowoomba bypass. PHOTO: CONTRIBUTED



39,285 shipping containers of equipment throughout an approximate 24 to 36 month construction period". Also making the list were the \$160 million Interlink SQ freight terminal on the cards for Charlton and the \$4.7 billion Melbourne-to-Brisbane inland rail project.

Signed, sealed, delivered

TOOWOOMBA developers have completed almost \$106 million worth of major projects (over \$2 million) in the past 12 months. The \$25 million Northpoint

Shopping Centre complex was the biggest single contributor to the construction industry to be completed in the past year.

Drayton Shopping Centre developer Chris Hughes also finished his \$20 million project in January. He estimated the centre would reel in an annual retail expenditure of more than \$125 million.

The redevelopment of the former Chronicle building on Ruthven St into a temporary City Library cost \$4 million, while the refurbishment of Blue Care on Stenner St injected \$6.5 million into the construction industry.

TSBE's Mr Charles said the monumental development spend was a sign of things to come.

"No other regional city, nor capital city for that matter, will be able to boast the amount of infrastructure development occurring," he said.

"We will no doubt become the epicentre of infrastructure. I look forward to seeing some major growth in our region over the coming years."

■ Look through The Chronicle's interactive online development map and view the full TSBE report at www.thechronicle.com.au.

\$2.1b

Approved and awaiting start



\$45 MILLION: Work on the new Toowoomba ring road should finish by the end of the year.

\$5.9b

Proposed projects



\$2.6 MILLION: The State Government's 12-unit social housing block on Holberton St will be completed by the year's end.

\$106m

Completed in past 12 months

Ongoing jobs to be created

THE \$11 billion development spend will create as many as 10,000 new jobs, according to the Toowoomba and Surat Basin Enterprise.

TSBE research found between 6500 and 10,000 ongoing jobs would be created during the first three years of the

completion of the Wellcamp Airport, Toowoomba bypass and QIC shopping centre redevelopment.

A report commissioned by TSBE showed the bypass would create an annual increase of between 2356 and 6862 full-time jobs while the Wellcamp Airport would create more than 3100 full-time jobs within the Toowoomba region once up-and-running.

The QIC redevelopment should bring 1000 retail jobs.

"These effects will rise dramatically if other major projects, such as the Melbourne to Brisbane Inland Rail Project and New Acland Coal Mine Stage 3, get off the ground and come to fruition," TSBE CEO Shane Charles said.

IN BRIEF

Pirate warning

A SOUTH AUSTRALIAN couple has visited Toowoomba to highlight the trials of life on the ocean, battling piracy, shipwrecks and separation.

June and Geoff Harrison toured the city on Thursday as part of a three-month road trip to help raise the profile of their work for the Mission to Seafarers.

Mr Harrison said seafarers made great sacrifices, often suffering loneliness and home sickness during long periods away from their family and friends.

"We owe it to seafarers to look after them when they arrive in Australian ports, as they contribute to increasing our quality of life," Mr Harrison said.

A Viking Tale

STUDENTS and teachers from Clifford Park Special School, with the Blue Roo Theatre Company, will take to the stage on Tuesday, June 17, for a special production.

The production called A Viking Tale has been written by the students in conjunction with performers from the Blue Roo Theatre Company, and is supported by the State Government's Arts Queensland.

Tickets for the play are \$3 at the USQ Arts Theatre A Block, and runs from 6.30pm to 7.30pm.

Tickets are available from the Clifford Park Special School on Rob St.

Monster book sale

THE Blue Care Lockyer Valley Community Centre Auxiliary is holding its annual monster book sale next week.

Head down to the Lockyer Valley Regional Council Shire Hall on North St for the sale which starts on Thursday, June 5, at 8am.

It will be open from 8am to 5pm on Thursday and Friday, and 8am to noon on Saturday.

A variety of newly donated books will be on sale and book donations are welcome.

Phone 5468 4600 for more information.

Jury notice

JUROR numbers 20 to 70 and one to 5 are to report at 8.45am on Monday.

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